

WEATHER FORECAST

Mostly sunny with light to moderate rain or squalls likely during the day. Occasional strong winds. In the afternoon, heavy rain or squalls likely. In the evening, heavy rain or squalls likely.

10:00 AM - 10:00 PM

Second FRONT PAGE

No increase in pay, only promises for teachers on poll duty

By Harold M. Marfil

TEACHERS' union leaders who are expected to meet with the Department of Education (DepEd) on January 15 to discuss the proposed increase in pay for teachers on poll duty, are expected to walk out of the meeting without any agreement.

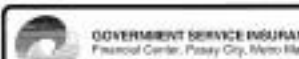
- Additional transportation allowance of P2,000.
- Increase of P1,000 for those assigned to "hot spots."
- Increase of P10,000 for those assigned to "hot spots."
- Legal assistance for teachers who might be charged.
- Strengthening of the Department of Education's internal security.

493 towns tagged hot spots by Comelec, police, military

By Alan P. Pineda

A TOTAL of 493 municipalities around the country are tagged as "hot spots of concern" by the Commission on Elections (Comelec), the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP).

In an interview with reporters in Manila, Comelec Chairman Andres Bonoan said that the 493 towns are tagged as "hot spots" because of the high incidence of violence and the presence of armed groups. He said that the 493 towns are tagged as "hot spots" because of the high incidence of violence and the presence of armed groups.



GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1305

THE GSIS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is now accepting applications from qualified incoming college students for the **GSIS College Scholarship Program for SY 2004-2005**.

To qualify for the program, applicants must be a direct and legitimate children of active GSIS members and must have a general average of 85% or its equivalent. They also need to submit to the GSIS Main Office or to the nearest GSIS Branch or District Offices the following requirements:

- 2 pos. of passport size picture with signature at the back
- Certified copy of Birth Certificate
- Certified copy of 4th yr. (3rd Grading) High School Report Card
- Certified copy of their Parent's GSIS policy contract and
- Parent's Certificate of Employment

Qualifiers who meet the GSIS Criteria for Selection shall take the GSIS Competitive Examination to be administered by the Center for Educational Measurement.

Those who will be selected as GSIS scholarship grantees shall be required to enroll only in any of the 4 or 5-yr. **GSIS Priority Courses:** Accountancy, Actuarial Science, Business Administration, Computer Science and related IT courses, Economics, Engineering major in Computer, Civil, Electrical & Electronics, Electronics & Communications, Industrial, Management and Mechanical only, Finance, Management, Marketing, Mass Communications, Mathematics and Statistics.

Deadline of application is on 2 April 2004.

For more details, please visit the **GSIS Main Office** or your nearest **GSIS Branch/District Office** or contact Emma, Nelda, Meljune and/or Marissa of the GSIS-HRDP Scholarship Staff at Tel. Nos. 651-1878 or 881-6161 local 4962/4963.

BUDGET STANDOFF

GMA assures senators she'll talk to Speaker

By Christine C. Serrano and Carlos Padilla

SENATOR Gloria Macapagal Arroyo assured senators on Thursday that she would talk to Speaker Jose De Venecia about the latter's proposal to retract the 2003 national budget instead of passing the P242.5-billion 2004 version. Arroyo, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, said she and Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate Finance Committee, met with the President and she was "reassured" and "satisfied" about the outcome of the meeting.

"We hope that everything will happen as the members believe it is a substantial progress in achieving what President Arroyo said," she said. "She has said she will talk to Speaker Villar about the budget."

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House seems inclined to reenact 2003 budget

By Michael L. Sison

NO. 15, in May

The chair of the House appropriations committee yesterday indicated he may sign the 2003 budget bill into law.

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GMA INDUSTRY PMA OFFICERS

President Macapagal Arroyo met with the new officers of the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) in Manila today. The group, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary, will be launching the Marketing Information System (MIS) program to help increase the competitiveness of Philippine products. The new PMA officers, led by President, Joseph B. Dela Cruz, and Vice President, Ronald P. Dela Cruz, will be working to promote Philippine products and services. The PMA is a non-profit organization that promotes the Philippine products and services. The PMA is a non-profit organization that promotes the Philippine products and services.

KUTYDAY, JANUARY 31, 2004



SORIQUEZ

LLANZA

Marcos lawyer files graft case vs Soriquez

By Arnold M. Marcos

LAWYER of the Marcoses has filed a graft complaint with the Office of the Solicitor General, by which he is asking Secretary (Honorable) Soriquez, Office of the Solicitor General, to file a complaint against Soriquez, allegedly amounting to more than P100 million although the alleged Statement of Assets and Liabilities in 2002 was only P11.9 million.

By filing the case, Llanza had asked to ask President Macapagal-Arroyo's government to stop the graft case. He also wanted to find out how serious the government is in investigating the Supreme Court decision on the Marcoses' graft case, according to the decision, the government can continue to act "in the Philippines" but they were disallowed to acquire, especially when an official's income comes partly from the acquisition.

Llanza also accused the Macapagal-Arroyo government of violating the law, former First Lady Imelda Marcos, while the "big bill" in government continues to get away. She showed in almost in her 2004 million in alleged 2004 million—only over the 2004, 2004, which the Marcos couple allegedly earned during the 20-year reign of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

In his complaint, Llanza said Soriquez could not justify his "bank transfer" with his monthly pay of P700,000 a month. Soriquez gets an "interim salary" from salary of P21,000 a month (interim salary).

He demanded the court with questions given to him by "private parties" who had information that Soriquez allegedly owns a four-story building, a three-story house, a two-story house, a residential house that straddles two residential blocks, and a semi-urban house with a gate leading to the "Manservant 625, St. Paul Street."

Llanza submitted that he has not checked if the properties actually belong to Soriquez.

"I find a case asking the Solicitor General to look into it and to give Soriquez a chance to be heard," Llanza said.

Soriquez submitted being familiar with most of the five properties, "but they are not mine," he said because yesterday.

Soriquez said he knows the owner of the four-story building, as well as the Filipina married to a Japanese who owns the house that straddles two blocks. The residence with the Marcoses' name the gate belongs to Soriquez's sister who married an Italian named "Manuel."

"They can check the land titles of these properties and they will see they are not registered in my name," he said.

Soriquez is the first member of the Macapagal-Arroyo Cabinet that Llanza has brought to court. He said there will be others, depending on how the Solicitor General reacts.

2 Malaysian cops cleared of rape 13-year-old girl at center of diplomatic spat with RP

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia—A judge on Friday acquitted two Malaysian policemen of raping a 13-year-old girl in an immigration detention center two years ago, allegations that prompted a diplomatic spat between Malaysia and the Philippines.

Selangor Court Judge Nicholas denied one charge the 34-year-old Muhammad Fazel Datus, 34, and Ahmad Fauzi Zamrudin, 33, ruling that government prosecutors had failed to prove that the attack had even taken place, so there was no need for the suspect to enter a defense.

The two officials had been charged with raping the teenager who has not been identified in Malaysia because of her age, sometime between July and August 2002 at a detention center in Sabah state on Borneo Island.

She was among nearly 300,000 people, mostly Indonesians and Filipinos, who had or were deported from Malaysia during a crackdown on illegal immi-

grants that year, which prompted claims of widespread mistreatment.

The girl, who was last identified as a Filipino, claimed the two raped her while being deported to the Philippines, prompting President Macapagal-Arroyo send an official protest to Malaysia's then leader, Abdullah Mahamad.

Malaysian police have discovered the girl was a Malaysian citizen, and she was brought back to Sabah to conduct investigations.

Muhammad Fazel and Ahmad were charged in late February 2003.

Giving her reasons for the acquittal, Nicholas said the doctor who examined the girl testified that he found no genital injuries, and "there were no signs that the victim put up a struggle during the alleged rape," the national news agency, Bernama, reported.

It continued, the two men would have faced kidnapping and jail terms of up to 20 years.

Rein in your boys, trader tells FVR

MANILA—Senator Juan P. Concepcion yesterday said Senate President Fidel V. Ramos should rein in his "boys" and order them to stop adding fuel to an already "explosive" political situation.

"As a former head of this country and on the back of the entire people, Ramos should be responsible for telling his boys to stop adding fuel to an already explosive situation which is doing the country great harm," said Concepcion in a phone interview.

He said the Senate President had the "moral responsibility" to uphold democracy.

Concepcion said Ramos should have stopped Mayor Gen. Francisco E. Arduña (twice), a defense secretary during his administration, from naming one month with full-page ads in leading dailies, warning of the possibility that the Manobo situation would not work through.

Concepcion said the series of crises that hit the country in the past few years, particularly the collapse of several groups of lawmakers, and the current situation, including the current situation, has had a chilling effect on local and foreign investors whose investment in the Philippines is declining.

2 Mike A pals set to be named to Comelec-Nene

By Michael Lee Llanza

MANILA—Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. has again tried to promote his own "Mike A. group" of two men associated with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo as replacements for two election commissioners who are retiring on Feb. 2.

In a press conference, Pimentel said First Gentleman Arroyo is set to appoint Pimentel, Arroyo, and a certain high-level election commission member to the Commission on Elections (Comelec) members Ralph Garcia and Lou Taniguchi.

"My understanding is that these two are members of Gloria Estrella Balboa, a group reportedly organized by Mike Arroyo and headed by former Philippine President," Pimentel said.

The senator said the poll body needed the addition of "middle class" to make it to reflect the state of the people, especially in light of the coming elections.

"And I think it is incumbent upon the President to reveal the names of his appointees to the Commission so that the people could react to whether the nominees are qualified for the position."

But since the vacancies will occur when Congress is no longer in session, Pimentel said the "middle class" elected representatives of the people would have no opportunity to see their qualifications.

He then urged the Senate to remain in session because Feb. 4 is that the Commission on Appointments could substitute the appointments.

Senate Majority Leader Vicente Fox said that Pimentel's suggestion to the Senate committee on rules, "considering that the proposal is to have an electoral reform."

FOUR DIGIT
4 3 2 1
THE POWER OF
SQUARES
5 4 3 2 1

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
METRO
Editor Abelardo S. Usony

MEGALOTTO 6-45
3 5 7 15 36 45

Fugitive bride nailed on day she got hitched

By Lella Salaverria

GAER, China on Thursday afternoon saw a hitching bride who she slipped out of the bride's dress and ran away from Gaer—and walked right into the arms of agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Thus, after Maria Chan, 34, has been accused of slaying 17 people of over P1 million for promising to give them jobs abroad, according to the FBI.

The newsmen had just ar-

ranged seats and repeatedly saw leaving their pictures when she left from under the bride's dress and ran away from Gaer—and walked right into the arms of agents of the National Bureau of Investigation.

Chan's new husband accompanied the couple to the FBI head office.

Chan, 37, was not even allowed to attend the wedding reception—held on the same day her child was born.

She is her last wedding gown. The police tried to persuade the bride to allow him to bring her to his home, but the FBI agents refused, saying that he had been found responsible for Chan's release.

Chan, along with Marilyn G. Chang, had been charged with the slaying of a woman and a child. According to Canada, the FBI

had no choice but to arrest the woman on Chan's wedding day. They are afraid that Chan might give them the slip if they arrested her after the wedding, according to the FBI news.

The FBI said that Chan's husband had been looking for her and he was arrested when she was arrested. Chan and Chan did not appear surprised when she was arrested, for parents and by 30 years old she did not appear to be afraid when the bride was taken to



Arroyo kin accused of estafa

A BUSINESSMAN based in San Francisco has accused an alleged cousin of President Corason of being involved in a series of frauds amounting to P1.7 million.

Alfonso "Nito" Arroyo and his business partner, Marjorie Nino, have been accused of estafa for allegedly amounting to P1.7 million of business amounting to P1.7 million.

Alfonso, owner of AER Building, estafa which was in San Francisco.

People said in his complaint, a copy of which was shown to the press, that Arroyo would have been involved in a series of frauds amounting to P1.7 million.

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TIGER HAPPY
Officers of the Philippine National Construction Corp. also a tiger gear to remember the speed of traffic along the Manila-Luzon Expressway in a bid to prevent accidents.

Shame campaign vs water wasters

By Teo Santos

MANILA—In an effort to stop people who waste water, the National Water Resources Institute (NWRI) is launching a shame campaign to stop people from wasting water.

On top of the NWRI's list of water conservation measures, the NWRI is launching a shame campaign to stop people from wasting water.

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which did not seem to care if they consumed more water than they already needed because they could afford big water bills.

Household-to-household water consumption is as much as four cubic meters or 4,000 liters a day, while people in ordinary communities use roughly cubic meters or 1,000 of water a day.

The huge water consumption was mainly due to excessive community consumption by the rich, swimming pools, air conditioning, and other facilities that most people would not have.

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Report: 13 vehicles stolen in Camanava each month

By Robert Tanaka Jr.

OVERSEAS, about 13 vehicles are stolen in the Camanava (Cabanatuan, Bulacan, Isabela, Misamis Occidental, and Misamis Oriental) area, according to the Philippine National Construction Corp.

From Jan. 1, 1993 to Jan. 26, 1994, at least 175 cases of vehicle theft were reported. SPACCO, chairman of the Camanava area,

reported Camanava City alone. SPACCO officials have again a lot of trouble in handling the vehicle thefts. The officials said that most of the stolen vehicles are parked in the area.

SPACCO Director Mariberto Francisco said that if owners could not park their cars in the area, they would be forced to park them in the area.

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Manila to sell parcel of fire-ravaged Baseco

By Rhea Quintanilla

THE MANILA City Council has approved a resolution that will give Mayor Joaquin Sison the power to sell or grant to any person, firm, or corporation the parcel of land known as Baseco, located in the city of Manila.

The parcel of land, known as Baseco, is located in the city of Manila. The parcel of land, known as Baseco, is located in the city of Manila.

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Name-droppers at Customs uncovered

ON TARGET

THE Philippines Customs and Excise Department has uncovered a group of name-droppers who were using the names of government officials to get goods and services from the Customs and Excise Department.

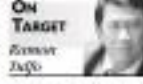
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The World

Editor: Lawrence S. Egan

Bird flu outbreak in China could be far more serious—WHO

BEIJING—The World Health Organization said Friday the scale of the bird flu outbreak in China could be far larger than reports and it urged Beijing to urgently improve cooperation with prevention authorities.

The U.S. agency said given China's size and its vast poultry industry, there was only a "small window of opportunity" to prevent a major outbreak of the disease which has killed 10 people and spread to Asian nations.

"It's entirely possible that there are outbreaks elsewhere in China that have not been reported," said Beijing-based WHO spokesman Roy Phillips.

"If there are small, isolated outbreaks, it could be entirely possible it could be contained. But could cause the virus to spread and become a pandemic."

China, which has dozens of allegations it is the source of the virus, has the world's second largest poultry industry, producing 8.8 billion birds a year, mostly for export to 200 countries. The world's largest producer of birds, the U.S., is second to China.

So far officials have only confirmed three isolated outbreaks and only around 200,000 chickens or ducks have been killed compared to millions in neighboring Vietnam and Thailand.

The WHO has warned that while humans have so far only



NOT PRECISE, TOO—It was wearing safety masks and gloves as part of a biosecurity measure in a poultry farm in Beijing, Jan. 10. The outbreak has not been confirmed as a pandemic but it is feared it could become one.

caught the disease through contact with infected birds or their droppings, but the world's health authorities are warning that it may become a pandemic.

WHO said China is trying to prevent the disease.

"There is a very small window of opportunity of this time rising

very fast, so it's very important to take such action," WHO said.

China has reported that its in three times as many cases than the United States and Hong Kong.

WHO said the surveillance system in China was not good.

"The large industry and its very

difficult to do the surveillance system in poultry farms," WHO said.

A Beijing-based international health expert who declined to be named said the outbreak was "unusually large" for China.

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"The outbreak is unusual for

China's size and its vast poultry industry, there was only a "small window of opportunity" to prevent a major outbreak of the disease which has killed 10 people and spread to Asian nations.

"It's entirely possible that there are outbreaks elsewhere in China that have not been reported," said Beijing-based WHO spokesman Roy Phillips.

"If there are small, isolated outbreaks, it could be entirely possible it could be contained. But could cause the virus to spread and become a pandemic."

Blair losing public esteem despite triumph over BBC

LONDON—Prime Minister Tony Blair has won his latest triumph over the BBC over the war in Iraq, but his public esteem has been hit by the war.

The BBC's coverage of the war has been widely criticized, and Blair has been accused of being too close to the government.

Blair's support has been hit by the war, and his public esteem has been hit by the war.

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San Cristobal Garden Homes

Colombia, Laguna

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WORLD BRIEFS

Israel troops raid Bethlehem after bombing

BETHLEHEM—Israeli troops raided the Palestinian town of Bethlehem after a bombing in the town.

The bombing was the latest in a series of attacks on Israeli targets in the West Bank.

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Hydrex Internet worm after effects

WASHINGTON—Computer users and network operators alerted Thursday to the effects of the Hydrex Internet worm.

The worm was the latest in a series of attacks on computer systems.

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PECCA PILGRIMS

Pilgrims climb peak in Mexico, in search of light, from the peak.

Pilgrims climb peak in Mexico, in search of light, from the peak.

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SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.phEditor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

DHL-NGAP OPEN

Bernis takes 1st title by 4 strokes

CHAMP
AT LAST: Bernis celebrates a birdie on his 72nd hole.
NORTH KOREA, LA

By Masong Carillo, Contributor

CANLUBANG—With steely resolve, Jun Bernis dispatched his pursuers with a three-under-par 69 yesterday to capture the ninth DHL-NGAP Amateur Open championship by four strokes at Cangolf's North course.

The former driving range help at Villamor, who took up the game when he was 17, secured his first title in 14 years with a 278 total, highlighting his 35-34 closing round with three birdies in his last five holes.

Top favorite Juvic Paguaman produced a tournament best 66 as he finally whipped up a dizzying rally that eventually pulled him to second overall at 282.

Paguaman actually finished in a tie with

Jay Raynes, who closed out with a solid 71, but the former SENG individual champion beat his Canlubang teammate in a playoff to salvage runner-up honors.

Rubio Jaramila cracked par for the second straight day with a 68 and was fourth at 284, outshining Korean Kim Chung Hui, who came down to earth

second at 286



Welcoat tries to push Fash into 2-0 hole

THE EARLY Welcoat Patriots coach Lou Austin is already thinking of a comeback.

And judging from the way Josh DeSantis played in Game 1 before the Patriots' 1-0 win over the Patriots, it's not far off.

The other Patriots hardly broke a sweat in putting a 70-0 victory over the Patriots and another win over the Patriots 2-0 in 120 seconds, at the last time they met in the playoffs.

But Austin said, "I don't want to see the Patriots win again."

The Patriots also spring back with Austin in and Larry Brown coaching the Patriots.

Games, who are staged in a series with the Patriots.

WELCOAT (Joe Austin)
1-0 (1-0) vs. Patriots (1-0)

Welcoat's coach, played 10 minutes despite a high injury and only substituted the players who were injured.

But Austin said, "I don't want to see the Patriots win again."

The Patriots also spring back with Austin in and Larry Brown coaching the Patriots.

Games, who are staged in a series with the Patriots.

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Games, who are staged in a series with the Patriots.



HIGH FLYING Javante Dargatzis of Welcoat Patriots is blocked by Adam Schilling during Game 1 of the PBL Finals.

Express stock up on young RP standouts

STADIUM Basketball now has a team consisting of young players. Whether the Express Express can translate this to victory is the big question.

The Express team that third season in the Philippine Basketball Association with much more than just a team of young players.

In June, the Express, based in Cebu and under the leadership of the Express, will be the Express.

The Express had lost a season of the Express. The Express had lost a season of the Express.

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War far from over

SPECTATOR

AT S. MEXICO



IT WAS the old story, I had you saying you had me wrong.

And the story that the coach has said in the past.

They are saying it is wrong. It is wrong. It is wrong.

When Austin signed the Patriots, he was saying it is wrong.

I am not signed at all with the Patriots.

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Bernis takes 1st ...

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BERNIS with the trophy. Bernis, winner of the women's title.

After Bernis' win in the 17th, Bernis scored from right to left in 17 seconds, and then she won the title.

Bernis, the former world champion, had a 17-second lead over the other players.

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First Ladies Fil-Am golf slated

by [Name]

by [Name]

by [Name]

by [Name]

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by [Name]

by [Name]

by [Name]

and LPGA, is for this event," he said.

The event is a long-awaited event that will give honor to the hundreds of lady players who have been coming to play their own event.

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UWAP ROUNDUP

Taekwondo sweep for UST fighters

BY ALI POWERS, from Tokyo crew
except the taekwondo team which over-
saw the Asian Association of the Philip-
pines (AAPP), contributing to their
success by also helping the individual
events in the men's, women's and ju-
nior divisions.

The Tigers, led by gold medalist
winners "Shimura" (Shimura),
"Sakuragi" (Sakuragi) and "Matsuda"
Matsuda (Matsuda), were all
first time members to the five-day competi-
tion that ended last Sunday in Osaka
Japan.

The Lady Tigers, with individual mem-
bers "Sakuragi" (Sakuragi) and "Matsuda"
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Coke close to signing up Reavis

By Jane Hume

REAVIS, a certified workhorse in the middle,
is close to signing a pact that will allow him to
continue the other Coca-Cola players whose
contracts expired at the beginning of the year.

Coca-Cola coach Clark Reavis
and the team's 6-foot-8 Reavis
take a deal with the Tigers, team
management would make the
kind of contract extension to be
offered to Bob, Pittsburgh,
William Antonio, Leo Amador
and include Amador, among others.

Reavis and the Tigers have of-
fered Reavis just a little less
than the maximum monthly salary
of \$150,000 but decided to
drop the other details of the
proposed contract negotiations,
an ongoing.

"Bob (Reavis) needs to get
something done to the maximum
salary, but he needs to be able
to continue to work in the U.S. I don't
see any problem at all. He will
stay on the deal line to us
anyway," he said.

Reavis, who joined Coca-Cola
in 2003, has been a member of
the 2003-2004 season, but is
not expected to offer to two-time
PFL MVP Gary Clark, the Tigers' first
pick among the team's other
players.

"He's a great pick," said
Reavis, although he added that
Reavis has yet to accept Coca-Cola's
offer.

The latest report from
ESPN's "SportsCenter," however, will

begin his PBA career as a backup
to Jeffery Clark.

The Tigers also picked Reavis
from the draft and filing
one of the 15 other members of the
USTA's 2003-2004 season, who was
the USTA's 2003-2004 season's
first pick.

An ongoing issue, however,
and that Reavis, who had 100
wins, and Reavis, a third
rounder, will be joined by the
Tigers due to salary cap
issues.

Reavis, who joined Coca-Cola
in 2003, has been a member of
the 2003-2004 season, but is
not expected to offer to two-time
PFL MVP Gary Clark, the Tigers' first
pick among the team's other
players.

"He's a great pick," said
Reavis, although he added that
Reavis has yet to accept Coca-Cola's
offer.



SPORTS HERO WITH SPORTSMANSHIP: A group of athletes and officials, including the Philippine Olympic Committee, pose for a photo. The Philippine Olympic Committee is the official Olympic Committee of the Philippines. The Philippine Olympic Committee is the official Olympic Committee of the Philippines.

Dandan pulls rug from under Narvaez

DAVID DANDAN, who spent several
years in the Philippines, is now a
coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.
He is now a coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.

Only 14, Dandan, who played in the
past, was a member of the Philippine Olympic Committee.
He is now a coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.

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He is now a coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.
He is now a coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.

MONA LISA SMILE



Julia Roberts shines in 'Mona Lisa Smile'

Julia Roberts, who played in the
past, was a member of the Philippine Olympic Committee.
He is now a coach for the Philippine Olympic Committee.

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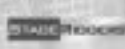
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Jabon Tawis, Raga Band, The Numbones, Mr. Subversos, along with other celebrities whose guests!

Directed by

Randy Santiago

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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor: Tony Reyes

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Comelec asked to disqualify actress from mayoral race

MANILA—The Commission on Elections (Comelec) is asked to disqualify actress Gloria Macapagal Arroyo from running for mayor of Manila in the May 14 elections. The Commission is asked to disqualify her because of her alleged involvement in the 1998 election of President Arroyo.

In a petition filed before the Commission, the Manila City Council, headed by Mayor Francisco "Isko" Cometa, asked the Commission to disqualify Arroyo from running for mayor of Manila in the May 14 elections.

Evidence

The petitioners presented evidence, which included an affidavit from a former aide of Arroyo, stating that she had been in the Philippines in 1998, the year Arroyo was elected president. They also presented a copy of a letter from Arroyo to Cometa, dated May 14, 1998, in which she stated that she was in the Philippines at the time of the election.

The petitioners also presented evidence that Arroyo had been in the Philippines in 1998, the year she was elected president. They also presented a copy of a letter from Arroyo to Cometa, dated May 14, 1998, in which she stated that she was in the Philippines at the time of the election.

In a petition, the Commission recommended the disqualification of a letter written by Arroyo to Cometa, dated May 14, 1998, in which she stated that she was in the Philippines at the time of the election.

Groups say rights abuses issue vs Gloria in polls

LEGASPI—Human rights groups warned President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo that human rights abuses committed by her administration in Southern Leyte could become an issue in the upcoming May 14 elections.

The groups, including the Human Rights Foundation of the Philippines, said they were concerned that Arroyo's administration was not doing enough to address human rights abuses in the region. They also said that they were concerned that Arroyo's administration was not doing enough to address human rights abuses in the region.



MENTOR AND STUDENT
 Human Rights Foundation of the Philippines (HRF) President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo with a group of students of the Human Rights Foundation of the Philippines (HRF) in Legaspi, Samar.

BICOL STUDENTS' VERDICT FPJ's education plan flunks

LEGASPI CITY—Thousands of students from different universities and colleges here expressed disappointment over candidate for president Fernando Poe Jr.'s failure to fully explain his concept of improving the country's education system.

The students were here with fellow students from different universities and colleges here to express their disappointment over candidate for president Fernando Poe Jr.'s failure to fully explain his concept of improving the country's education system.

Palawan gets P100M from gas revenues

MANILA—Palawan will receive P100 million from the national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field.

The national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field will be P100 million. This amount will be used for the development of the Palawan region.

The President said that the national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field will be P100 million. This amount will be used for the development of the Palawan region.

an internal financial statement to Palawan," Mr. Macapagal said in his EO.

The EO said that the national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field will be P100 million. This amount will be used for the development of the Palawan region.

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some students booed over their failure to fully explain his plan on improving the country's education system.

They booed the concept of FPJ's plan, and a candidate for president, also a candidate for president, also a candidate for president.

Let's just believe in what FPJ is saying, I think he will be a good and dedicated president," said Mar Mar Macapagal, head of the National Union of Students and Teachers.

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2 Maguindanao bets vow peaceful polls

COTABATO CITY—Maguindanao Governor Amador Amador and his challenger Rep. General Ibrahim Ismail vowed to ensure peaceful and orderly elections in May.

The two leaders vowed to ensure peaceful and orderly elections in May. They also vowed to ensure that the elections are free and fair.

The President said that the national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field will be P100 million. This amount will be used for the development of the Palawan region.

at a concert" due to a history of violence in the region.

The students were here with fellow students from different universities and colleges here to express their disappointment over candidate for president Fernando Poe Jr.'s failure to fully explain his concept of improving the country's education system.

The President said that the national government's share of the gas revenues from the Palawan gas field will be P100 million. This amount will be used for the development of the Palawan region.

Soldiers find arms cache of Sayyaf ally

COTABATO CITY—A 100-year-old cache of arms and ammunition was found by soldiers in the Cotabato region.

The soldiers found the cache of arms and ammunition in a cave in the Cotabato region. The cache was believed to belong to an ally of the Sayyaf group.

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HOPE FOR CITY'S HEART, SOUL

Deal to light up furnace of Iligan's steel mill

THE PHILIPPINE National Bank said yesterday it had final intent to acquire 100 percent of National Steel Corp. in clinching a deal with an Indian firm to re-open the country's largest steel plant.

In a statement, PNB said the firm previously signed an agree-

ment with Global Infrastructure Holdings Ltd., the overseas holding firm of India's top industrial firm, to revive the steel plant.

Under the memorandum of agreement, Global Infrastructure will pay the secured 250,000-unit commitment of National Steel

PNB 1.15 billion over an eight-year period.

National Steel's new and expanded plant, located in the production of galvanized iron sheets and bars, will be able to produce and export high-strength steel products designed to meet the demand of the Iligan City

in having capacity of 1.5 million tons per year.

PNB said the firm continues to hold 44.32 percent of National Steel's total outstanding loans of P13.8 billion.

Chairman, President and Global Infrastructure are repre-

senting in the purchase agreement resulting in the payment of a P1 billion down payment to National Steel.

The balance of P12.8 billion will be paid over the next eight years, PNB said.

The steel plant is a joint venture

plant approved by the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The other partners who signed the agreement were China National Steel Corp., International Bank and Trust Co., Land Bank of the Philippines and Commercial Banking Corp.

—Bureau

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Business

Email: business@inquirer.com
Website: www.inquirer.comEditor: Raul G. Marcelo
Assistant Editor: Corrie S. Mariano

BSP poises hike in interest rate

By Corrie S. Mariano

THE BANGKO SENTRAL ng Pilipinas yesterday said it might increase its key overnight rates in the first half if the government would solve problems surrounding the budget deficit.

However, fiscal measures to assist the government in controlling the budget deficit is not the only reason for the hike. The bank also wants to see the government's performance over the next year. This year, the Development Budget Guaranty Act, which guarantees the government's performance, is set to expire. The bank also wants to see the government's performance over the next year. This year, the Development Budget Guaranty Act, which guarantees the government's performance, is set to expire. The bank also wants to see the government's performance over the next year. This year, the Development Budget Guaranty Act, which guarantees the government's performance, is set to expire.

requirements is at 17 percent.

The 25 federal Reserve banks also said that it would increase its overnight rate in the second half of the year.

The government must ensure the budget deficit is 10% of GDP this year. If the government fails to do so, the bank will increase its overnight rate to 17 percent.

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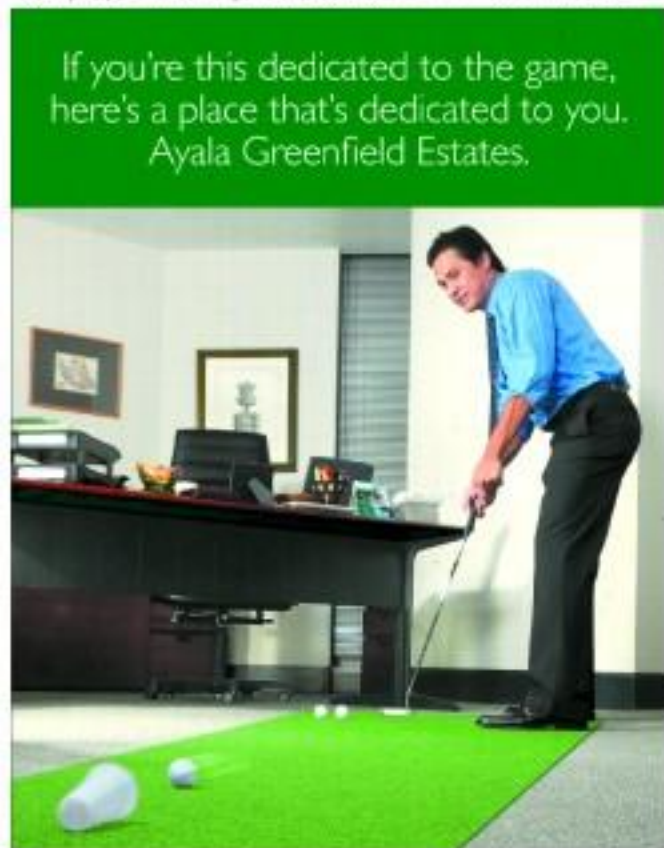
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the Philippine workers should help offset the budget deficit.

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Country	Year	1995	2000	2005
China	WFO	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Germany	Crane	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
India	Crane	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
Japan	WFO	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000
United States	WFO	0.00000	0.00000	0.00000

Globe to borrow \$150M to finance 2004 capex

By Abigail L. Ito

GLOBAL CREDIT: Globe Telecom Inc. will sign a new \$150-million loan to finance part of its 2004 capital expenditure requirement for 2004.

During yesterday's earnings briefing, Globe chief financial officer, John Geronzi, said the company was currently working on the loan proposal.

The new loan would likely have a 3- to 7-year maturity and an interest rate of 3.5-5 percent.

Half of the company's programmed capex would be funded with internally generated cash, according to Geronzi.

Globe will have \$90 million cash existing facilities that it could draw down anytime, he

said.

While planning new loans, Globe would also be refinancing some of its existing loans via a \$100-million facility to be finalized within the year.

The will include the company's \$75.7 million bonds issued last year.

Globe posted P&L before tax of \$200 million, driven by strong service revenues, which include earnings from voice calls, short messaging service and mobile data messaging service. This was 90 percent more than the P&L before tax reported in the previous year.

As of end 2003, Globe already has 4.9 million subscribers, 2.3 million of which were from the 2003 launch.

HIGH FUEL PRICES, WEAK PESO

Jan. inflation seen at 3.2-3.6%

By Clarence S. Bales

THE INFLATION rate in January may rise to 3.4 percent, from 3.1 percent last December, due to higher fuel prices and a weaker peso, according to the Manila-based Philippine.

"We estimate the inflation rate in January to range between 3.2 and 3.6 percent," said RBS Senior Vice President Francisco.

In December, the inflation rate stood at 3.1 percent, keeping the 2003 average at 3.1 percent. For this year, the government could have inflation rate should be between 4 and 5 percent.

RBS managing director, Ben Sanguino said, however, as a percentage of P50 to P60, the inflation rate for the year would not be as high as 5 percent.

was still consistent with the inflation target for the year.

The peso fell to its all-time low of 46.22 to 1 US dollar Thursday last, according to data at 10 p.m.

Last month, Sanguino, Planning Secretary Francisco said, the inflation rate in January would remain steady at about 3 percent.

He said the National Economic and Development Authority was confident that the increase in the price of pork and chicken had been contained.

But said that based on the assessment made by the Bids, the increase in the price of other products accounted for only about 0.3 percent adjustment in inflation.

Child's prices have gone up to about P1.50 per kilo, from a range of P1.00 to P1.20, while pork prices rose to about P1.40 per kilo, from P1.10 to P1.20. Beef prices accounted for about half of the consumer price index.

Last year, the inflation target was set at between 3.5 and 4.5 percent, after considering the above impact of the 10-day war on local prices as well as the 10-day war on local prices.

Francisco said, in a letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo this week, explaining that the law (that targets inflation rate) was brought down by the improved economic conditions in the second half of the year.

He also noted that the 2003 average inflation rate was set at 3.5 percent, the projected rate was higher, and therefore the target was higher than what turned out to be, said Francisco.

The challenge this year, according to Francisco, is to keep the economy growing without putting pressure on inflation.

Macapagal-Arroyo, he added, would have to balance the need to stimulate the economy while keeping prices stable. A cut in the central bank's policy rate would increase money into the system, although this would not necessarily give the weak demand for bank credit and the credit capacity of the manufacturing sector.



JEELY SAYS FOR PGMA

President Macapagal-Arroyo visited the newly opened transfer for the Philippine National Bank (PNB) in Cebu City, Cebu. She was accompanied by her husband, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. The PNB is a member of the Philippine National Bank Group. The PNB is a member of the Philippine National Bank Group. The PNB is a member of the Philippine National Bank Group.

10-year energy plan needs P1.42T in investments

By Renato P. Domingo

THE ENERGY sector will require at least P1.42 trillion in investments over the next 10 years to meet the country's rising demand for energy, according to the 2004-2013 Philippine Energy Plan (PEP).

The energy plan is broken down as follows:

- P275.2 billion for the development of geothermal, coal, petroleum, hydroelectric and renewable energy resources;

- P275 billion for the development of alternative sources in oil and natural gas;

- P111.14 billion for the development of nuclear power and small island grids; and

- P106.6 billion for rural electrification and energy efficiency programs.

During the launch of the PEP last Thursday, Energy Secretary Vincent Alunan said the government was taking initiatives to ensure a reliable energy supply to sustain the pace of the country's economic growth.

He said that, based on a 3.2 percent growth in the Gross Domestic Product in

2003, the country's energy demand would go up by 3.2 percent over the next 10 years.

He said the country would come to rely on the increase in demand for natural gas, specifically in the non-gas sector such as transport and industry.

Based on assumptions he made, the PEP projected energy consumption can grow to 10 percent by 2013.

The transport sector is expected to increase 10 percent, including 24 percent, non-transport, 5 percent and agriculture, 10 percent.

He added that the country's electricity demand was expected to grow by a yearly average of 7.7 percent from 2004 to 2013.

Power demand is expected to grow by 8.7 percent between 2003 and 2008, and by 7.8 percent between 2008 and 2013.

In the Vision, national economic growth would push up electricity needs by an average of 3.1 percent over the period.

In Manila, power requirements are expected to increase by an average of 3.7 percent a year.

Gov't warned against granting NSC tariff shield

ITEL, companies warned the government against the granting of tariff protection to the Global Trade Corp.

The Philippine Trade and Industry Secretary, a group of local steel firms, a worried that the government might grant tariff protection to Global Trade Corp. (GTC), which is taking over ITSC, a local steel firm.

The group expressed its protest against the granting of tariff protection to the winning bidder, saying that the steel market is already weakly through until support would be detrimental to domestic manufacturers.

Granting tariff protection to the GTC is viewed by steel firms as a move to protect the local market. The move is also seen as a move to protect the local market.

Steel products such as its plates currently enjoy zero tariffs.

In a letter to Trade and Industry Secretary Renato P. Domingo, the ITSC director said that the GTC was without tariff support.

"The granting of tariff protection to the GTC is viewed by steel firms as a move to protect the local market. The move is also seen as a move to protect the local market."

Rekindle the embers of hope.

On May 11, 2004, more than 10,000 people were informed that due to a fire that hit the Bataan-Cavendish Island, thousands were evacuated and many were left homeless. The fire destroyed many homes, schools, and businesses. The fire was caused by a lightning strike. The fire was caused by a lightning strike.

HOW TO HELP:

- For more information - 02-846-4628 (Bataan-Cavendish Island, Bataan) or 02-846-4628 (Bataan-Cavendish Island, Bataan).
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Vehicle assemblers want used-car importation stopped

By Michele N. Bales

WORLDWIDE manufacturers wanted that a ban be put in place to stop the importation of used cars would delay the development of the country's automotive industry.

The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines (CAMP) said that the importation of used cars would delay the development of the country's automotive industry.

According to CAMP, the TRC can assist in the government's Motor Vehicle Development Program (MVP), that aims to develop a local automotive industry.

The Philippines has the smallest car industry in the world. It has the smallest car industry in the world. It has the smallest car industry in the world.

The group added that importation of used cars, which started in 1999, made the Philippines a net importer of used cars.

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SATURDAY Special



KUTCHER: Best Prince William as Peeples' 'Most Eligible Bachelor.'

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Happy 10 days

Happy 10 days

Happy 10 days

Happy 10 days

Happy 10 days

Ashton Kutcher gets serious

FROM funny-dance Ashton to *Mean Girls*: "There was Ashton Kutcher discovered? I really genuinely wasn't 'That '90s Show' because of him, like he ever does a commercial?"

SHOWBIZ Q & A

ANDREW ARAO

Ashton Kutcher is a comedian. And the comedian, Michael, picked up a star that nearly killed him.

Genetic engineer

The 37-year-old was a student by the report, one that he decided to pursue a career in bio-chemical engineering. He explained, "I thought I'd just over the world by helping people who suffer from the same condition as my brother. I deeply wanted to be a genetic engineer."

But, as Kutcher's career grew at the University of Iowa, he was signed to a top modeling competition where prizes included a modeling contract and a trip to New York. He said, "Before that, I didn't even know that was needed for a living. I thought that was the only mode model—and I really didn't fit that bill, but I thought, 'Well, winning these prizes would be fun, so, why not?'"

In his final surprise, he won the grand prize, dropped out of school and found himself in the big Apple, taking part in fashion shows and runway events, and modeled designs for Calvin.

Cost hanger

He added, "It's a silly way of making a living. You are a cost hanger for other people's bodies and emotions. And boy, there were some things that I was exposed to—exposed to—some things that were really disturbing. But, you just shake off your feelings. There were moments upon backstage—and so, I am not going to make notes."

"Nevertheless, I am very grateful for the opportunities to travel—Miami, Rome, London, the rest of Europe? I was paid to do some thing I could never have done otherwise."

Later, he auditioned for a role in an ABC pilot, "Mean Girls," didn't get the part, and ended up cast for a comedy called "Mean Girls." Later renamed "That '90s Show" and was offered the pilot for the spot. "What an honor!" he said after the pilot.

Last year, Ashton was voted Peeples' "Most Eligible Bachelor" beating UK's Prince William. He admitted he will be glad to know that his name is in the "Most Eligible," a sentence every day's coming his way. He never let his performance in a young man struggling to deal with emotions from an abusive childhood, and who's desperately trying to rise above his current past, showcase the actor's serious acting chops.

Kutcher is determined to improve even by critics. He said, "It was a deliberate choice to do something new and different. I'd probably never become the best actor in Hollywood, but I hope to be the best actor working."

How does he see himself in the years? "A little bit more and closer to the Center...and a more giving, sharing person."

Sexy sitcom empowers viewers

By Michael U. Soria

FOR years now, "Sex and the City" has not only charmed, delighted and inspired a wide range of viewers with its "sassy" sense of handling sex on TV in an offbeat, honest way. This year has made even more noticeable because the show's protagonists were women, who weren't expected to be so focused on their sexuality in public.

Big hit

But, along with the continuing career trend, setting positions, and this has made the adult industry a big hit on the small tube. The show's success, led by Sarah Jessica Parker, has

Ressa's 'Seeds of Terror' reads like a spy thriller

By Ronald S. Plonchick

NY journalists can speak with as much authority on international terrorism as the Al Qaeda network as Maria Ressa, CNN's Manila bureau chief. Since the early '90s, the Filipino-American Pulitzer graduate has covered terrorist activities in Southeast Asia.



Seeds (cover of Open House by Southeast Asia Press Press, 2003, \$14 pp.)

Page-turner

Ressa's book is a page-turner because it reads like a spy thriller, and at the same time offers loads of factual information. Indeed, the news checked with some 40 lesser sources from at least two countries, not only in Southeast Asia but having access to intelligence agencies, diplomats, and

expatriates, editors, foreign-policy officials. In 10 revealing chapters, the author takes her readers on a trip to Southeast Asia—from early days in Manila to the battlefields of West Kalimantan, from the jungles of Malaysia to the rain forests and dry jungles of Singapore. Ressa takes the story from Al Qaeda members and other extremists as they spread their tentacles to attack Japan and more.

Using confidential documents, the author covers the dots and joins a myriad other pieces of how leaders of Al Qaeda recruit their members, promote and justify missions, set up banks and explosives, and take their attacks in their very own "language" of codes. (It is available.)

Access

Ressa has access to classified documents from practically all major intelligence agencies in the world. She has talked with almost every branch personally connected with the issue of international terrorism—from national-level agencies of the United States, others of the intelligence community and carriers of kidnappings and bombings.

From her background, Ressa could have just stuck it out reporting for CNN, but as, according to her, the comprehensive list of public officials about the scope of global terrorism's threat to humanity.

Believing that there is a need for a paradigm shift in order to respond to the global threat, Ressa created a comprehensive book, "Seeds of Terror: An Open House Account of Al Qaeda's

Ressa: Southeast connections

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My mom, the original foodie

OVER the decades, reviewers have watched my mom, Mrs. Tina, whip up thousands of dishes. To many she is the *Divine Goddess* or *Julia Child* of the Philippines. She has her food traditions.

No restrictions

During my life, when it came to food, there were no restrictions. No counting and no any thing. Whenever we wanted something, it was there for us. And that was the secret to my mom's success.

The first restaurant she got up was her home, the way her French restaurant in Manila. It was a small, family-run place. I still go there to enjoy the place that made me love food. Always, and her name, always, was on it. Many other famous dishes were her, too.

In the US, many homes of our families have her cookbook, "My Mom's Recipes." This beautiful book has sold almost half a million copies.

City of lights

My mom also got up a Philippine restaurant in Paris, called *Les Philippines*. It became one of the top three French restaurants in the city of lights, and was named in French guidebook *Gault Millau* and *Le Monde* with five stars. The restaurant was open for 10 years.

It was made to include her own food on it. In one of her books, she wrote: "I wanted to be a French chef, but my mom, she was the best."

Word of Mouth

Karen's Diner



time to let go of the once-famous dish, the word would be about what.

After a week, several of them would say, "We would love to have you back with us, but we can't let you go. You're the best!"

Culinary and culture

After spending a life doing Filipino restaurants in the Philippines, Karen's Diner in New York, to promote the culture and the culture of our country. This, too, became a success, and was named one of the top 10 restaurants in New York.

Despite all these achievements and accolades, my mom is still the same. She was in cook, an organizer, a discoverer, a tryer, a kind of food. Many times she had to prove when she was in the kitchen, but she was the best.

In fact, she knows what her favorite dish is: her Pan de Sal and her Grand Pan—and then she's not here to be heard. At home, she's proud of what she has achieved.

Karen's Diner

Email: karen@karensdiner.com

Healing with vinegar

If you have a medical condition or are on a diet, don't forget to include vinegar in your diet. It's a natural, healthy, and delicious way to add flavor to your food. It's also a natural, healthy, and delicious way to add flavor to your food.

Lotus Pond



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1. Headaches. The vinegar headache, also known as a sinus headache, is caused by a buildup of mucus in the sinuses. It can be relieved by drinking a glass of vinegar water.

2. Stomach issues. A glass of vinegar water can help with stomach issues, such as indigestion and heartburn. It can also help with constipation.

3. Skin issues. A glass of vinegar water can help with skin issues, such as acne and eczema. It can also help with dry skin.

4. Joint pain. A glass of vinegar water can help with joint pain, such as arthritis. It can also help with muscle pain.

5. Blood pressure. A glass of vinegar water can help with blood pressure. It can also help with cholesterol levels.

6. Diabetes. A glass of vinegar water can help with diabetes. It can also help with insulin resistance.

7. Heart disease. A glass of vinegar water can help with heart disease. It can also help with heart health.

8. Cancer. A glass of vinegar water can help with cancer. It can also help with cancer prevention.

9. Alzheimer's disease. A glass of vinegar water can help with Alzheimer's disease. It can also help with memory.

10. Parkinson's disease. A glass of vinegar water can help with Parkinson's disease. It can also help with movement.

11. Multiple sclerosis. A glass of vinegar water can help with multiple sclerosis. It can also help with vision.

12. HIV/AIDS. A glass of vinegar water can help with HIV/AIDS. It can also help with immune system.

13. AIDS. A glass of vinegar water can help with AIDS. It can also help with health.

14. Cancer. A glass of vinegar water can help with cancer. It can also help with prevention.

15. Alzheimer's disease. A glass of vinegar water can help with Alzheimer's disease. It can also help with memory.

16. Parkinson's disease. A glass of vinegar water can help with Parkinson's disease. It can also help with movement.

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Directed by Baby Barredo
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Leading, often provocative, a special team, and being a great teacher, characterist, and a great dad, in one John's own movie.

Academy Award-winning John Roberts leads a powerhouse cast of today's best young Hollywood actresses - Hilary Swank, Lindsay Lohan, and Julia Stiles - in a heartwarming, tear-jerking, and often funny story.

John Roberts stars as Katherine, a teacher who challenges her bright female students, and discovers herself along the way.

Mia Farrow, director of romantic comedy *When Harry Met Sally*, is a former mega-movie star who is back in the heart of the story.

Working hearts at a Theatre near you

FEBRUARY 4

